(d) if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Yes Sir. The Prime Minister on 23rd May, 2003 announced at Srinagar a comprehensive package of assistance for the State of Jammu and Kashmir covering various aspects of development and security, with a thrust on generation of new employment opportunities for the youth of the State and relief for migrants affected by militancy and cross-border shelling. The Package pertaining to the textile Sector includes schemes aimed at development of traditional cottage industries of wool, pashmina, sericulture, handicrafts and carpet weaving. The Package was approved for Rs. 70 crore for a five year period. The Government have not prepared similar package for any other State of the country.

(d) As the set of circumstances prevailing in the State of Jammu and Kashmir is special, the Special Package of Assistance has been announced for that State. However, the Package draws largely upon the existing Tenth Plan Schemes of the Ministry of Textiles benefits of which are available to all States of the country.

Import of cloth from China and Korea

†1695. SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn towards the news-item captioned "Readymade Kapdon mein bhi cheen ki dhak" which appeared in the Media recently;

(b) whether it is also a fact that after giving relaxation in import of cloths; the cloths will be imported from China and Korea in the country in t^rge quantity;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to protect the indigenous textile industry?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(c) As per the latest available Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI & S) data, the country's total imports of ready made garments, and the share of China and Korea thereof, during the period April-July of the year 2002 and 2003 have been as follows:—

	April-July 2001-02	April-July, 2002-03
Total imports of readymade garments; of which, share of:	6.8	13.8
(1) China	0.9	1.9
(2) Korea	0.1	0.2

Provisional

There has been some increase in the imports of ready-made garments. However, the total quantity imported is not significant; it is less than even 1% of our domestic consumption.

(c) In the atmosphere of liberalisation, the imports are governed by market forces subject to export-import policy in force from time to time. The liberalized trading regime would result in increased international trade in textiles thus providing greater export opportunities; and at the same time expose the domestic industry to import penetration in the domestic market. The industry will have to improve its efficiency and productivity to meet the emerging global competition.

(d) Government has been taking a number of steps to strengthen the indigenous textile industry to meet the emerging competition. Some of the import initiatives taken are:

(i) The Government has imposed a combination of *ad-valorem* and specific duty on "whichever is higher basis" on import of a number of textile items to safeguard the interest of domestic industry.

(ii) Government is keeping a watch on the imports and would strive to ensure that imports do not cause any serious detriment or injury

to the domestic industry. In case any unfair trade practices come to the notice, action, if necessary, under WTO provisions could-be taken.

(iir) The Government has de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment from the SSI sector. It has also raise the SSI investment limit for knitted segment to Rs. 5 crores.

(iv) The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

(v) Weaving, processing and garment machinery, which are covered under TUFS, have been extended the facility of accelerated depreciation at the rate of 50%. Cost of machinery has also been reduced through Fiscal Policy measures. This further encourages modernisation.

(vi) With a view to making fabric production competitive, the custom duty on import of shuttleless looms has been brought from 15% to 5%.

(vii) National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its six branches and Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet skilled manpower requirements of textile industry especially apparel in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(viii) Facilities by way of eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get the garments/textiles pre-tested for conforming to the requirements of importing countries.

(ix) Garment manufacturing small scale industries (SSI) units are eligible for the special benefits generally available to the small scale units such as priority sector lending to SSI, enhancing the limit of composite loan etc.

(x) In addition, besides Drawback & DEPB benefits, garment manufacturing SSI units can also avail of several facilities and incentives to promote exports of garments such as quota for investment under New Investor Entitlement (NIE) etc.

(xi) The Government has launched a centrally-sponsored scheme titled "Apparel Park for Export Scheme" for imparting focused thrust for setting up of apparel manufacturing units of international standards at potential growth centres and to give fillip to exports.

(xii) For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, a scheme "Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme" (TCIDS) has been launched.

Consignment of cotton through Wagah Border

1696. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pakistani importers of Indian cotton are keen to get their consignment of cotton through Wagah Border instead of *via* sea shipment; and

(b) India's response in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIGINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Government has not received any specific proposal about Pakistani importers of Indian cotton showing their keenness to get their consignment of cotton through Wagah Border instead of the sea route.

(b) Does not arise.

Opening of more showrooms by CCICI

1697. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Cottage Industries Corporation of India propose to open more showrooms both in the country and abroad to increase its turnover;

(b) if so, the details of its expansion plan;

(c) the places where the new emporia are planned both in India and abroad; and

(d) the action plan to boost our export and economy?